

# Peter A. Eck Conservation Area

## Ten-Year Area Management Plan FY 2016-2025



Lisa B. Allen  
Forestry Division Chief

1-11-16  
Date

## **Peter A. Eck Management Plan Approval Page**

### **PLANNING TEAM**

Travis Mills, Resource Forester

Mary Scott, Fisheries Management Biologist

Susan Farrington, Natural History Biologist

Justin Gailey, Wildlife Management Biologist

Aaron Stevenson, Resource Scientist

Jeff Crites, Conservation Agent

Chris Ely, Conservation Agent

Lesly Holt, Private Land Conservationist

Stephanie McKinney, Education Consultant

### **OZARK REGION**

RCT Chair

AJ. Pelt 12-21-2015  
Signature Date

### **FORESTRY DIVISION**

Forestry Management Chief

John Tuttle 1/11/16  
Signature Date

## OVERVIEW

- **Official Area Name:** Peter A. Eck Conservation Area, # 9007
- **Year of Initial Acquisition:** 1990
- **Acreage:** 371 acres
- **County:** Texas
- **Division with Administrative Responsibility:** Forestry
- **Division with Maintenance Responsibility:** Forestry
- **Statements of Purpose:**
  - A. Strategic Direction**

Maintain and enhance natural communities, including one of the largest stands of old-growth shortleaf pine/oak woodland; and maintain watershed integrity.
  - B. Desired Future Condition**

The desired future condition of this area is primarily concentrated on conserving the old growth pine/oak forest.
  - C. Federal Aid Statement**

N/A

## GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

### I. Special Considerations

- A. Priority Areas:** Upper Big Piney Terrestrial Conservation Opportunity Area, Paddy Creek Conservation Opportunity Area, Priority Forest Landscape
- B. Natural Areas:** Eck Memorial Natural Area is a 265-acre Natural Area. This area includes an old-growth pine/oak stand that is considered the best example of its kind under Missouri Department of Conservation (Department) ownership.

### II. Important Natural Features and Resources

- A. Species of Conservation Concern:** None observed.
- B. Caves:** None
- C. Springs:** None

### III. Existing Infrastructure

- 1 parking lot
- 1-mile hiking trail (Eck Trail)
- 1 gate

#### **IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations**

- A. Deed Restrictions or Ownership Considerations:** None
- B. Federal Interest:** Federal funds may be used in the management of this land. Fish and wildlife agencies may not allow recreational activities and related facilities that would interfere with the purpose for which the State is managing the land. Other uses may be acceptable and must be assessed in each specific situation.
- C. Easements:** None
- D. Cultural Resources Findings:** No known cultural resources.
- E. Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** None observed.
- F. Endangered species:** None observed.
- G. Boundary Issues:** None

### **MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations**

##### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Maintain healthy forests and watershed.
- 2) Control invasive plant and animal species.

##### **Management Objective 1:** Maintain healthy forests and watershed.

**Strategy 1:** Inspect the forest, at least annually, for any insect or disease issues. Conduct a forest inventory. (Forestry)

**Strategy 2:** Consider management options for perpetuation of unique old-growth forest. (Forestry, Wildlife)

##### **Management Objective 2:** Control invasive species.

**Strategy 1:** Survey for high priority exotic invasive species (e.g., spotted knapweed, Japanese stiltgrass and feral hogs). Feral hogs have been known to frequent this area. Eradicate and/or control these species, as is feasible. (Forestry)

#### **VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations**

##### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Protect and maintain a healthy stream riparian area.

##### **Management Objective 1:** Protect and maintain a healthy stream riparian area.

**Strategy 1:** Due to the steep nature of the topography, maintain a 150-foot wide riparian corridor of trees and vegetation along the 0.75 miles of stream. (Forestry)

**VII. Public Use Management Considerations****Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Encourage and increase outdoor recreational use and opportunities.

**Management Objective 1:** Encourage and increase outdoor recreational use and opportunities.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain existing hiking trail. (Forestry)

**Strategy 2:** Publicize the unique natural features of the area through media and one-on-one contacts. (All Divisions)

**VIII. Administrative Considerations****Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Acquisition of land

**Lands Proposed for Acquisition:**

When available, adjacent land may be considered for acquisition from willing sellers. Tracts that improve area access, provide public use opportunities, contain unique natural communities and/or species of conservation concern, or meet other Department priorities, as identified in the annual Department land acquisition priorities, may be considered. (Forestry)

**MANAGEMENT TIMETABLE**

Strategies are considered ongoing unless listed in the following table:

	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
<b>Terrestrial Resources</b>										
<i>Objective 1</i>										
Strategy 1		X								
Strategy 2		X								

## APPENDICES

### Area Background:

The Peter A. Eck CA commemorates the father of Robert Eck, who sold and donated most of the land to the Department in 1989. The 265-acre Eck Memorial Natural Area, within the area, contains one of the largest stands of old-growth shortleaf pine/oak forest remaining in Missouri.

### Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Feet	% of Area
Forests and Woodland	371		100
Stream Frontage		3,960	

### Public Input Summary:

The draft Peter Eck Conservation Area Management Plan was available for a public comment period August 1–31, 2015. The Missouri Department of Conservation received comments from one respondent (Appendix A). The Peter Eck Conservation Area Planning Team carefully reviewed and considered these ideas as they finalized this document. A brief summary of public input themes, including how they were incorporated or why they were not, can be found below. Rather than respond to each individual comment, comments are grouped into general themes and are addressed collectively.

### Department responses to themes and issues identified through Peter Eck Conservation Area public comment period

#### **Supports prohibiting single projectile firearm hunting on this area.**

The prohibition of single projectiles has been in effect since the early 1990s. There are no current plans to propose a change to this prohibition.

#### **Suggests increased feral hog trapping on area.**

We have successfully removed feral hogs from Eck and adjoining properties in the recent past. Our ultimate goal would be to completely eradicate all feral hogs throughout the state. Continued cooperation between the Department, U.S. Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture-Wildlife Services, and private landowners will hopefully eradicate hogs from this area. We will continue to address feral hog control as needed.

**Suggests better signage showing property lines and better trail markers.**

Property boundary lines are maintained on the area per Department guidelines. Boundary line maintenance on Eck is scheduled this fiscal year. We will remark the entire boundary with blue paint and signs at that time, per guidelines.

**Opposes timber cutting.**

We realize there are different views on timber harvests. The Department utilizes tree thinning and/or harvesting to meet specific management goals. Examples include restoring woodlands and glades, maintaining the health and vigor of forest trees, and utilizing trees that have reached or exceeded maturity. According to records, the last timber harvest on the Eck area occurred in 1995. This was a pine post harvest (thinning) to allow better growing conditions for residual trees.

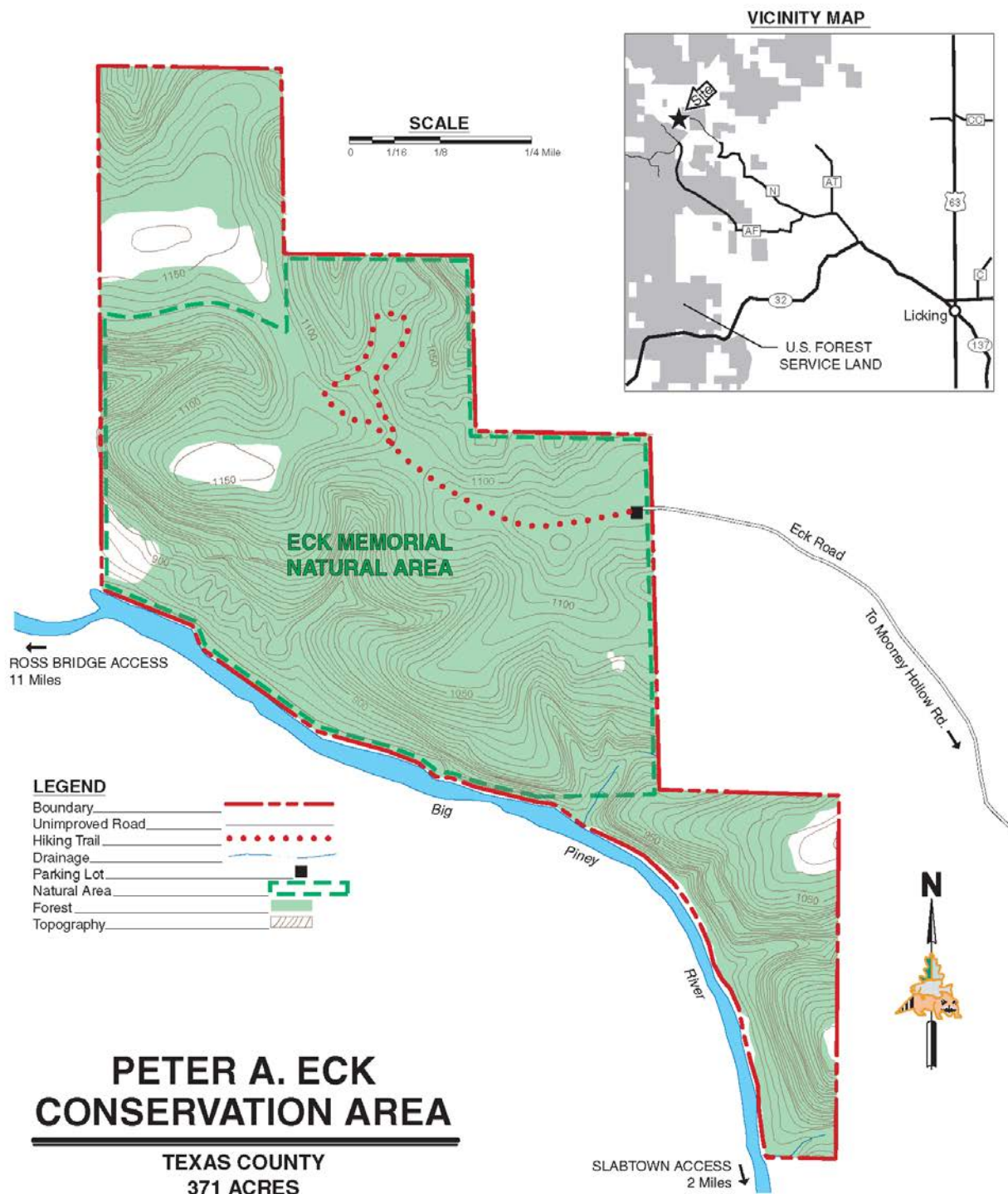
**Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Area Map

Appendix 2: Leaf-off Aerial Map

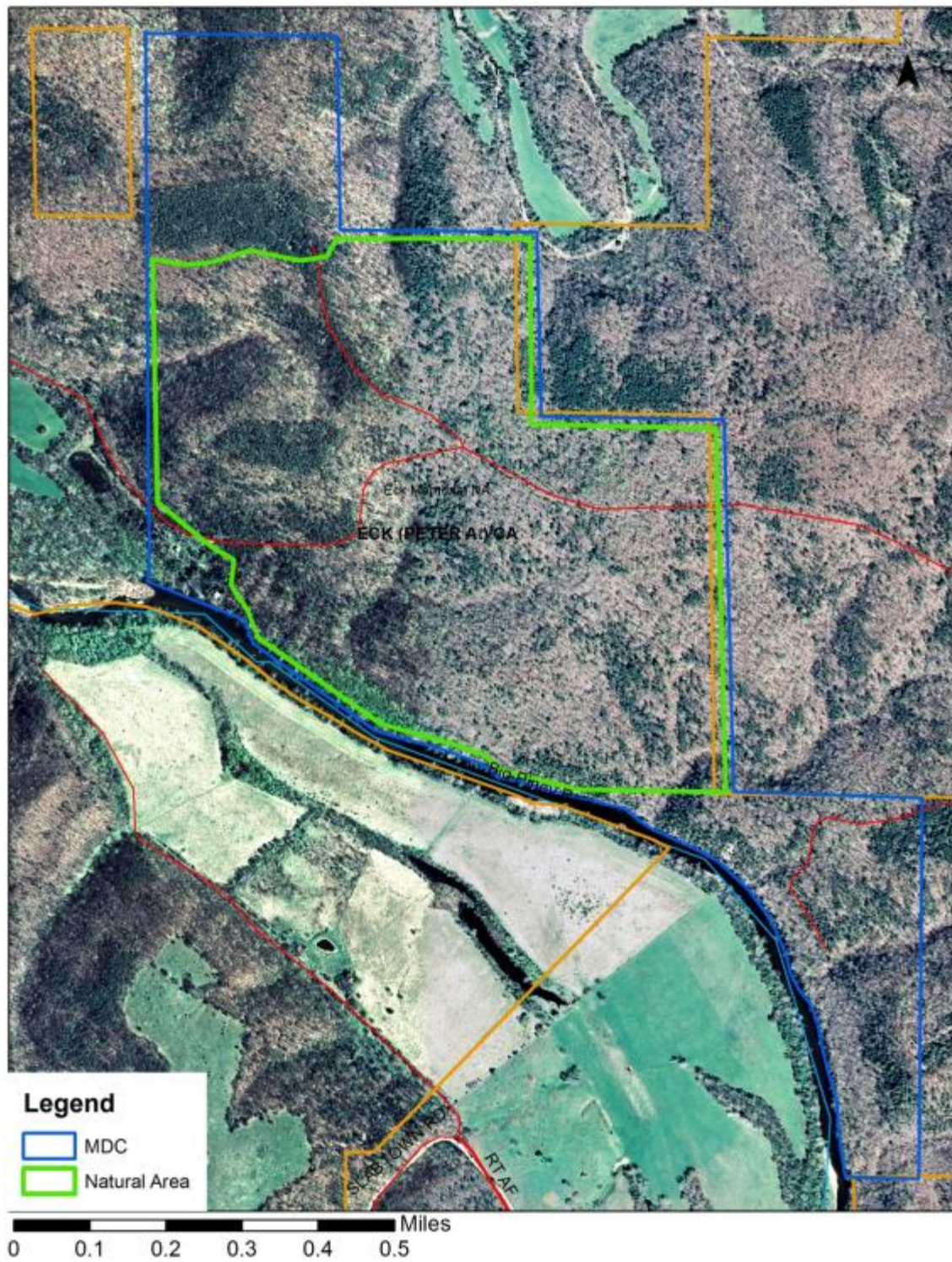
Appendix 3: Leaf-on Aerial Map

Appendix 4: Peter A. Eck Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments



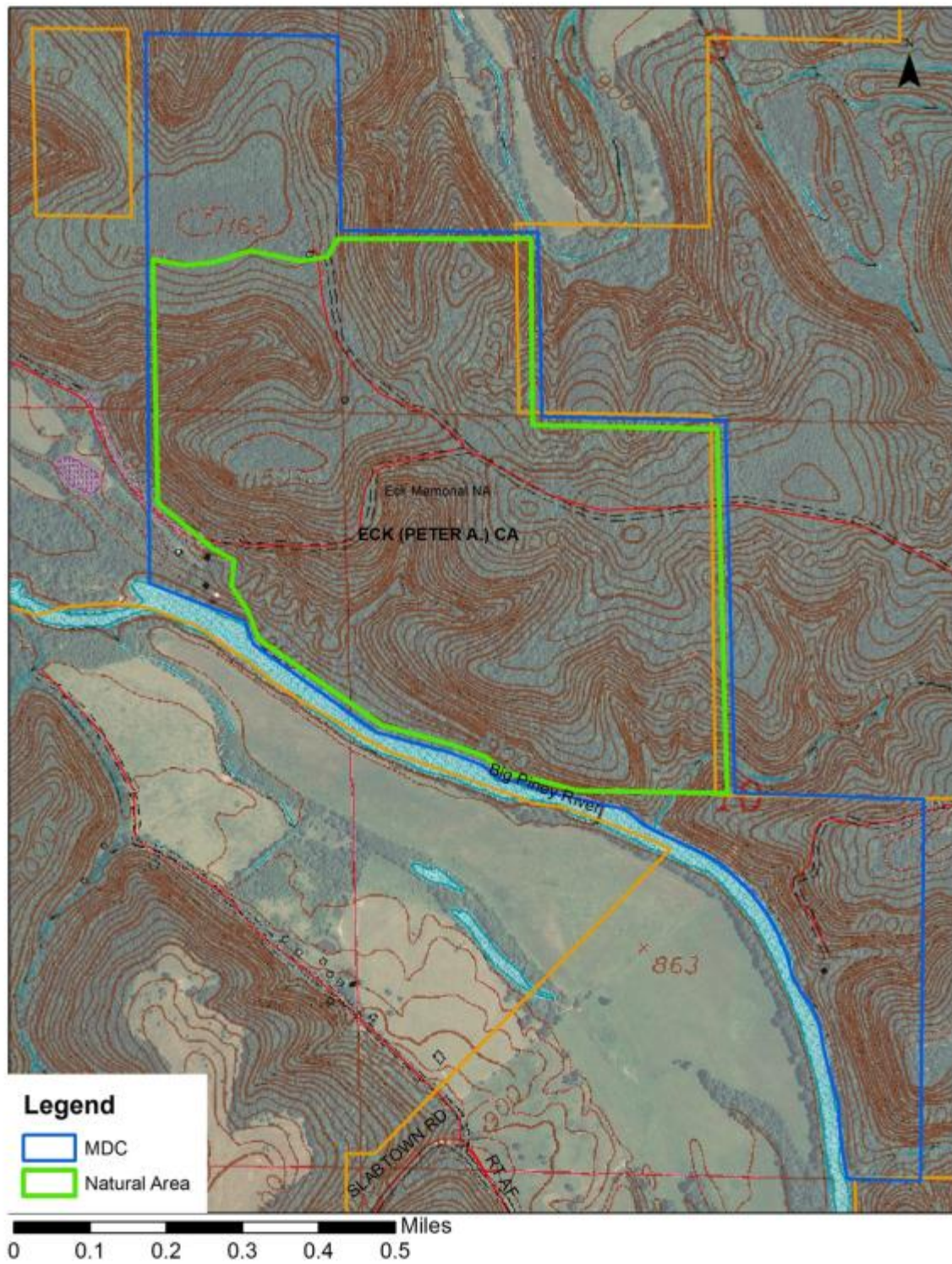


## Appendix 2: Leaf-off Aerial Map





### Appendix 3: Leaf-on Aerial Map



#### **Appendix 4. Peter A. Eck Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (August 1-31, 2015):

1. Continue NO firearms, walk in only
2. Better Ferrall Hog Trapping on that Area
3. Better signage at entrance showing property lines
4. Better trail markings
5. NO TIMBER CUTTING!